(b) if so, whether arrangements could be made to transport children by bullock carts, etc., in cases where it is beyond one Km., so as to reduce proliferation of primary schools and that all the children have educational facilities; and

(c) whether the transport system can also be used for the supply of mid-day meals, prepared at some centralised point?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) According to Fifth All India Educational Survey, 1986, 94 percent of the rural population have a primary school within a walking distance of one Km. All unserved habitations not having a learning centre within a radius of one Km., are proposed to be provided with learing centres under the proposed new scheme of Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of access being provided in all unserved habitations.

Mid-Day Meal Scheme in Government Schools

1479. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have stopped financing State Governments to introduce mid-day meals in Government schools in the Country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) if not, the details of amount incurrent on mid-day meal in the entire country during the last three years, State-wise/District-wise; and

(d) the steps taken so far by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (d) No, Sir. Under National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-Day Meal Scheme) foodgrains are made available free of cost to States/UTs through Food Corporation of India (FCI). This Ministry reimburses the cost of foodgrains to FCI directly and also reimburses the cost of transport through District Authorities/lifting

agencies for movement of foodgrains from FCI godowns to the schools at the rate of actual cost, subject to a maximum of Rs. 50/- per quintal. Therefore, no State-wise/District-wise allocation of funds are made under the scheme. Year-wise expenditure incurred during the last three years is given as under:

(Rs. in crores)

Year	Expenditure
1997-98	1070.38
1998-99	1600.15
1999-2000	1500.00

Ragging in Universities and Colleges

†1480. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that mental and physical torture of new comers due to ragging has started in most of the Universities and Colleges in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government are going to take effective and concrete steps to curb the menace of ragging; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (c) In May, 1999, the Government circulated guidelines to all States/UTs, Universities, IITs, IIms and RECs, indicating certain steps to prevent incidents of ragging in educational institutions, for appropriate action. UGC also circulated the report of the UGC Committee to all Universities for curbing the menace of ragging in these institutions. The Committee, *inter-alia*, recommended that the Central/State Governments may enact legislation prohibiting ragging in educational institutions; treating ragging as a cognizable offence and prescribing suitable punishment keeping in view the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.